

Clean Water Action Plan

2000 Budget Request



March 1999

Why is the Clean Water Action Plan Important?

- The Clean Water Action Plan is about restoring and protecting the rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and wetlands Americans love.
- The President and Vice President initiated this multi-year effort last year to revitalize the nation's commitment to our precious water resources.
- The Action Plan seeks to protect public health, address polluted runoff, protect natural resources, and improve citizen participation. It sets ambitious goals and provides tools and resources to help farmers, landowners, local watershed groups, states and tribes meet them.
- The Action Plan seeks to reorganize restoration and protection efforts around watersheds and the unique challenges facing each of them. It seeks to apply cost-effective solutions to the most pressing problems.



Budget Summary

The Clean Water Action Plan was initiated with a five year funding proposal that would provide approximately \$2.3 billion in new funds to enhance key programs to address the critical problems facing our watersheds.

The President's 2000 Budget requests \$468 million in new funding for several key programs that will:

- Assist farmers as they address water quality impacts of crop production and animal feeding operations;
- Address the impacts of polluted drainage and runoff from abandoned mines; and
- Reduce flood damage and restore streambanks and other critical habitat.

In 1999, the President requested a funding increase of \$568 million. Unfortunately, Congress was only able to fund about 1/3 of this request or \$171 million.

The Clean Water Action Plan is a broad plan that uses existing programs and funding as well as new investments to address problems in our watersheds. Federal, state, tribal, and local partners have made substantial progress over the last year in implementing the Action Plan's 111 Key Actions.

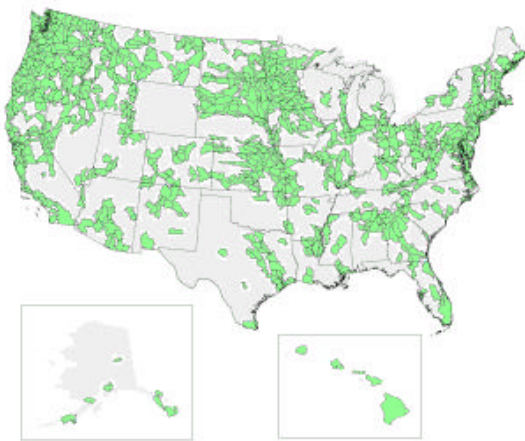
Clean Water Action Plan Funding		
(in millions)		
1998 Base	1999	2000
Appropriation	Appropriation	Request
-----	+\$171.0	+\$468.0
\$1,636.0	\$1,807.0	\$2,275.0

(The Clean Water Action Plan was created in 1998 and the left column on the chart above, *1998 Base Appropriation*, represents the base resources in relevant programs available to the participating agencies when the Action Plan was created. 1999 was the first year additional funds were requested to support these programs.)

First Year Accomplishments

Unified Watershed Assessments. One of the most important aspects of the Action Plan was the development of the first national, coordinated statement of watershed conditions and priorities by states and tribes. EPA and USDA worked together to assist states and tribes as they compiled existing sources of watershed information and coordinated with others to produce a statement of watershed priorities. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, 6 territories, and 18 tribes have completed Unified Watershed Assessments.

Highest Priority Watersheds for Restoration in 1999 and 2000



(As Identified by States and Tribes)

Address Impacts of Animal Feeding

Operations. Feedlots and other concentrated areas used in meat and poultry production contribute to approximately 20% of the identified impacts to assessed rivers. EPA and USDA developed a draft national strategy designed to foster implementation of pollution control measures on the 450,000 feedlots across the country. The participation of thousands of interested stakeholders has helped to shape and strengthen this strategy. Implementation of the final strategy will begin in 1999.

Protect Public Lands. Protecting and preserving the nation's 800 million acres of public lands, which include some of our most valuable water resources, is a key challenge for the 21st century. The Clean Water Action Plan calls for a unified and coordinated plan to restore and preserve these national treasures. Federal land and resource managers propose initiating a national dialogue on improving our stewardship of these precious public lands and waters during 1999. Public "listening sessions" will be held around the country to help shape a coordinated plan for public land and water resource management.

Protect Coastal Waters. Coastal waters are among our most valuable assets. Over 50% of our population lives in coastal watersheds. With the assistance and guidance of NOAA and EPA, 29 state and territorial comprehensive coastal polluted runoff programs are largely completed and implementation has begun. States and territories will receive additional assistance to finish refining and strengthening these important programs.

Enhance Private Land Stewardship.

Approximately 60% of the identified threats to water quality come from sources of polluted runoff, including agricultural, urban and forested lands. Many of these lands are privately held.

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.**

Nearly \$1 billion in federal funds have been committed to 6 states that have signed up to participate in this program, which encourages farmers and ranchers to remove sensitive lands from agricultural use.

- **National Conservation Buffer Initiative.**

Conservation buffers intercept sediment and other pollutants before they reach rivers, lakes and streams. This cooperative venture has resulted in the installation of 260,000 miles of protective buffers.

Protect Public Health. Americans rely on clean water. The quality of our rivers, lakes and coastal waters directly affects the quality of our tap water and the fish and shellfish we eat. We rely on good water quality every time we visit a beach or swim in a lake.

- **Safe Seafood & Drinking Water.** EPA is implementing a strategy to reduce health risks from toxins, such as mercury, in fish. Ten federal agencies are working together to assist states, tribes and local governments as they work to assess and protect the rivers, lakes, and ground water aquifers we rely on for our tap water.

- **Harmful Algal Blooms.** NOAA and other state and federal partners have developed an emergency response plan to coordinate federal assistance to state and local governments to respond to outbreaks of harmful algal blooms, such as *Pfiesteria*.

- **Beach Water Quality.** EPA's Beach Watch web site came online in May 1998 and provides the first national listing of beach conditions.



2000 Budget Requests (Highlights)



Department of Agriculture

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program** **+\$126 million**

The EQIP program provides incentives to farmers and ranchers to assist in their voluntary efforts to prevent polluted runoff. If fully funded, EQIP will assist 30,000 farmers and ranchers and provide \$35 million to address conservation and water quality issues on tribal lands.

- **Locally-Led Conservation** **+\$20 million**

This effort provides grants to local entities to develop voluntary, community-based approaches to accomplish effective nutrient management, water quality and quantity improvement, and natural resource protection.

- **Polluted Runoff from Animal Feeding Operations** **+\$20 million**

Funding will assist farmers as they work to address the pollution impacts from the 450,000 animal feeding operations in the U.S. These funds will be targeted to small and medium sized farms in need of technical assistance to develop and implement comprehensive nutrient management plans.

- **Improve Water Quality on Public Lands and Private Forests** **+\$78 million**

The Forest Service will enhance watershed conditions on public lands through increased inventory and monitoring, improvement of inland and anadromous fisheries, rangeland vegetation, maintenance and decommissioning of forest roads, and other watershed improvement activities. Private sector conservation stewardship will be encouraged through increased cost-shared planning and incentive programs with forest landowners.



Department of the Interior

- **Improve Water Quality on Public Lands** **+\$17 million**

The Department of the Interior will work to improve watersheds on public lands, including restoration of stream banks and riparian habitat, and will begin implementation of the Unified Federal Policy for federal lands.

- **Abandoned Mines** **+\$25 million**

To address the significant polluted drainage and runoff from abandoned mines that affect many watersheds, this funding will allow the Department of the Interior to fund partnership grants to states and cooperative agreements with local groups to implement high priority clean-up projects.



Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

- **Harmful Algal Blooms and Coastal Polluted Runoff** **+\$5 million**

Funding will support expanded research and development of a rapid response program to address outbreaks of harmful algal blooms such as *Pfiesteria*. Funding will also expand the ability of coastal states and territories to manage polluted runoff and reduce coastal water pollution.



Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers

- **Protect Wetlands** **+\$11 million**

Preserving and restoring wetlands and other natural habitats is one of the key objectives of the Action Plan. Funding will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to enter into partnerships with state and local governments on watershed level protection.

- **"Challenge 21" Flood Protection and Ecosystem Restoration** **+\$25 million**

"Challenge 21" is an innovative new program proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers. In cooperation with communities, innovative ecosystem restoration solutions will be sought to reduce the potential for catastrophic flood damage by restoring wetlands and the natural flow of rivers and streams.



Environmental Protection Agency

- **Water Quality Management** **+\$25 million**

Funding will address polluted runoff from animal feeding operations; support standards for nutrients that cause fish kills and dead zones; and assist local watershed groups with strategies to improve water quality and to restore wetlands and river corridors. Congressional action is also requested to expand polluted runoff funding for tribes and to increase the use of Clean Water State Revolving Funds to address polluted runoff and improve estuaries.

- **Interagency Projects** **+\$111 million**

Everglades: Funding will support the acquisition of sensitive lands needed to ensure the healthy functioning of this complex ecosystem and for on-the-ground restoration efforts, such as restoration of the Kissimmee River.

California Bay/Delta: Funding will support a wide variety of continuing efforts, including ecosystem restoration, reduction of polluted runoff and industrial and municipal discharges, as well as efforts to improve water use management.